



You are all brothers (Matt 23:8)
Pope Francis' visit to Iraq
5-8 March 2021

Guide for the journalists

**In occasion of Pope's Francis visit to Iraq
(5-8 March 2021)**

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THE CHURCHES THAT POPE FRANCIS WILL VISIT IN IRAQ

Cathedral Sayidat al Najat (Our Lady of the Salvation or Our Lady of Perpetual Help) in Baghdad

The cathedral Sayidat-al-Najat (Our Lady of the Salvation) is located in Baghdad, Iraq's capital city, in the district of Al Karadah. The building is 600 metres away from the Tigris river, on its Eastern bank, and just some hundreds metres from the national theatre.



History of a construction

The first primitive church Sayidat-al-Najat had been built in 1952, as a modest place of worship, just before the cathedral was erected in 1968, after 3 years of construction works. The adjacent primitive church became a space for condolences, used during mourning periods.

There was a urge for building the cathedral Sayidat-al-Najat, as a large number of Christian families, including Syriac-Catholic ones, moved from the ancient and densely populated Baghdad's town centre to the new district of Karadah, modern and attractive, which progressively became the gravity centre for the Syriac-Catholic community life.

Dedicated to the Virgin Mary mother of Jesus-Christ, the cathedral Sayidat-al-Najat (Our Lady of Perpetual Help) was consecrated on March 17th 1968 by Mgr Youhanna Bakos, Syriac-Catholic bishop of Baghdad, in the presence of the bishops of all the Iraqi capital's Christian communities.



The architect and designer of the church was a Polish man named Kafka. He was assisted by the Romaya engineering agency for technical drawings. The Iraqi masonry contractors Victor Tapouni and Adnan Sajed were in charge of the construction works.

The architect's intention is easy to guess at first sight. This cathedral-church looks like a boat, with its large cross raised as a mast, supporting an arch-shaped sail. The evangelical symbol is obvious: the cathedral Sayidat-al-Najat is a boat, carrying worshippers on board, just like Jesus on the boat with his disciples.

October 31st 2010: a tragedy

On October 31st 2010 was committed in the cathedral Sayidat-al-Najat the most horrible attack against Iraqi Christians. A group of 5 to 15 jihadis from the so called Islamic State of Iraq massacred 47 people (children, women and men, among them two priests, Thair Abdalla and Wassim Sabih) and injured tens of others. Lacerated bodies covered the ground all over the church. The walls were riddled with bullets and blasts. An inconceivable tragedy.

Witness of this disaster, Mgr Pios Qasha, episcopal vicar for the Syriac-Catholic diocese of Baghdad, was one of the first people to enter the cathedral after the Iraqi security forces' intervention. He took a picture, one by one, of the 47 dead bodies that littered the cathedral's floor.

This attack was a watershed event, the world then became suddenly aware of how Iraqi Christians were threatened, abused and persecuted by Islamic terrorists' and mafia groups.

The restoration erased the stigma

Since then, the cathedral Sayidat-al-Najat has been refurbished and even adorned to overcome the massacre's scars. Overcoming does not mean forgetting. A memorial has been erected in an adjacent room, where sullied sacred objects can be seen, as well as memorial personal belongings of Fathers Thair Abdalla and Wassim Sabih.

And indeed the cathedral looks brand new. The restoration decided by Mgr Matti Shaba Matoka, archbishop of Baghdad, was given to the architect Zeyad. Mgr Mar Ephrem Yousif Mansour Abba, appointed in March 2011 Archbishop of Baghdad, supervised the building and renovation works. On December 14th 2012, the cathedral was inaugurated in the presence of nearly all Eastern Christian patriarchs.

In concrete terms, wood panelling covers all the inside pillars and walls. The name of the martyrs is soberly carved in the wood all around the nave. Natural light seeps in through multicolour windows, granting the place with a beaming atmosphere. Large ceremonial chandeliers fill in the visual space and give it its magnificence. Above the altar, an (inside) arch reproduces the (outside) boat's sail.

This restoration is far from winning unanimous support. Nothing explains spontaneously the history of the attack. Should the victims' blood have been left as so, as a symbol of what happened here and of



how fragile Christianity is in this country? The matter remains unsolvable.

As unique stigma of the river of blood, a red marble line runs on the floor from the altar, crosses the nave and ends upon the esplanade, at the foot of the cathedral's steps.

Discovering some works of art

On the arch above the altar in the church's choir, hangs a painting of the Virgin Mary (Our Lady of Perpetual Help), hands opened as in supplication, and carrying her son on her heart, Jesus Christ the Saviour. This painting has suffered no deterioration during the attack from October 31st2010, which is considered by many as a miracle. The work of art is a drawing made by the priest Mikhael Oufi in Roma in 1904. The painting used to adorn one of the lateral altars of the former Syriac-Catholic Christian district of Baghdad, Agd-al-Nasara.

In the cupola, above the choir, a mosaic made of earthenware tiles features the coronation of the Virgin Mary, holding in her arms her child Jesus. This work of art has been made in 1994 by a Muslim artist.

The graveyard

In a crypt adjoining Our Lady of the Salvation are located the graves of several church servants and clerics, including the two priests killed on October 31st2010.

The other tombs which use to lay on each part of the esplanade are nowadays covered with a paved patio. On the southern wall of the cathedral, the funeral plates for the deceased people are embedded within the wall.



Mar Yousef (St Joseph) cathedral in Baghdad

The Chaldean cathedral Mar Yousef/Saint Joseph in Baghdad, in the district of Al Karada in Baghdad, 900 metres from the eastern bank of the Tigris River.

History of the St Joseph Cathedral in Baghdad

The Catholic Chaldean cathedral St Joseph in Baghdad has been built to meet the needs of the Chaldean community who had left in the 1950s the old district of Agd al-Nasara, where was located the cathedral of Mary Mother of Sorrows and went to settle in the modern district of Karada.



This need for a new and modern touch emerged when Yusef VII Ghanima accessed the patriarchal see in 1947. It really was the start for the construction of a new Chaldean spiritual beacon in Karada.

The foundation stone of the cathedral was laid by the Patriarch of the Chaldeans, Yusef VII Ghanima, on the Holy Cross Day in 1952. It was consecrated and inaugurated by the same Patriarch in 1956. All along the building time, funds were being raised by a committee, which actually also supervised the whole construction.

Before St Joseph cathedral was built, there was already a small shrine, called Mar Yousef, very close in the neighbourhood within the gardens of the “Chaldean Mercy” organization, as well as a school managed by this same organization. Since the cathedral’s inauguration, the shrine and the school have closed. They merged to give birth to a large community centre.

After the new Chaldean cathedral had been inaugurated, Masses and services were celebrated there by clerics of the former cathedral

Um al-Ahzan (Mary Mother of Sorrows). Three years later, in 1959, the first rector of the new cathedral was appointed, Father Yousif Babana, assisted by a vicar, Father Gorial Qoda and by the parish priest of the cathedral Father Kyriakos Hakim.

Description of the cathedral Saint Joseph in Baghdad

The Catholic Chaldean cathedral Saint Joseph in Baghdad is not eastern-oriented as are many churches traditionally; but is oriented along a north-east/south-west axis. A slender and rectangular bell-tower stands next to the entrance door, in the north-western corner.

Its structure is made of reinforced concrete, with a basilica-typed architecture. The Chaldean cathedral Saint Joseph looks like a large hall, with no inside pillars, and topped by a two-parts sloping roof.



When looking at the inside, daylight comes in through clerestory windows on the north-western façade, through beautiful stained-glass windows just above the entrance porch and eventually also through windows within the cupola just above the sanctuary.

The ceiling is flat and covered with wood panels featuring a large cross in its middle.

The main entrance to the cathedral, in line with the nave, opens onto a transversal narthex, taking the entire cathedral's width. On the southern side of the narthex, there is a small chapel where around 15 persons can stand.



The building looks like a large hall without any inside pillars. The space inside is arranged so that the three conventional parts of the Eastern Syrian churches are respected, while offering a resolutely modern version. From the large nave where the churchgoers gather, we behold the whole building. At the end of the nave, where the deacons sing masses and read the Bible, the choir takes a large platform up, with the Golgotha in its middle, on which rests the Gospel book. Lastly, the sanctuary, reserved to the clerics, is also on a kind of stage. Deprived of royal doors or separating curtain, it simply consists in a double high-altar. The former stepped high-altar backs onto the apse's wall, still hosting the tabernacle. The new high-altar is freestanding in the middle of the sanctuary and is adorned by a carved wooden frontal.

In the northern side-aisle of the sanctuary stands an altar, above which a very large icon “odigitria” (Mother of God pointing the path) hangs. In the southern side-aisle stands also another altar, with a large icon above it, which represents Saint Joseph carrying Jesus represented as a teenager. Saint Joseph also carries his traditional saintly attributes: the carpenter square, symbol for his righteousness and the lily, symbol for his purity.

The Chaldean cathedral St Joseph in Baghdad also hosts the tomb of Patriarch Joseph (Yusef) VII Ghanima, who died in 1958, two years after the cathedral's consecration. His beautiful funeral altar stands very close to the sanctuary, in the southern side-aisle. It features a church's façade, with its doors, its pillars, its tympanum and its pinnacles. The Patriarch's picture, in the middle of the memorial structure, is framed with inscriptions on grey marble, in Latin, Arabic and Syriac languages. There are some other tombs within the cathedral or in the courtyard. Among them, we can



mention the Bishop Sulaiman Al Saigh, deceased in 1961, Father Abdel Ahad Dahan, vicar of the Patriarch in Paris, deceased in 1970.

The Chaldean cathedral Saint Joseph in Baghdad has been restored and embellished several times, and as recently as 2018, by the Patriarch of Babylon of the Chaldeans, Louis Raphael Sako.



The al-Tahira Syriac-Catholic church in Mosul

Location

The (ancient) al-Tahira Syriac-Catholic church is located, in the Qala district, close to the crossroads between the Nabi Guorguis road and the road to Nineveh, in the heart of the old city of Mosul, formerly designated by the



Ottoman city walls on the west bank of the Tigris river, opposite ancient Nineveh, and 400 kilometres to the north of Baghdad.

It stands at the centre of a square around which there are several Christian buildings: the new al-Tāhirā Syriac-Catholic cathedral, the al-Tāhirā Syriac-Orthodox cathedral, the Armenian Apostolic church and finally the Syriac-Catholic seat of the archdiocese.

History of the (ancient) al Tāhirā Syriac-Catholic church in Mosul, prior to its destruction.

The first historical record of this church is found in a colophon dating back to 1672. The building therefore existed before the Persians launched their offensive and laid siege to the city in 1743, but it is impossible to date its foundation more accurately. Various elements can be used to date the building, including the stones re-used in the iconostasis which could be from the 12th– 13th centuries. The location of this church in the most ancient district of Mosul suggests a particularly ancient building, founded towards the 7th century.

In addition, there is an inscription indicating that the church was restored in 1744 following the attack by the Persians. The precise nature of this restoration remains unclear, but the Ottoman firman issued on this occasion may have offered an unexpected opportunity

to entirely renovate or even practically rebuild the church. This hypothesis is supported by the building's architecture, the overall style of the church is indeed in the Ġalīlī style.

Further restorations were undertaken, firstly the royal door in 1795, then in 1809 as indicated in an inscription on a pillar of the central nave, and in 1821 when work was done on the outside western door of the church.

Description of the (ancient) al-Tāhirā Syriac-Catholic church, prior to its destruction.

The church is entered via a courtyard that is below ground level. It is therefore situated almost three metres below the current ground level of the square and is partially buried, attesting once again to its ancient origins.

The al Tāhirā (the ancient) church presents as an Assyrian basilic of around 18 metres' long, from the western entrance to the sanctuary to the east and 24 metres' wide from the Saint James Intercisus chapel to the south to the baptistery to the north. The church is composed of three transepts, separated by four pairs of columns and very thick pillars which support the vault of the building. The sanctuary is accessed via four doors, including the royal door.



What remains of the (ancient) al-Tāhirā Syriac-Catholic church?

Bombarded during the mass raids on old Mosul in 2017, the al-Tāhirā (the ancient) church was severely damaged. The roof collapsed, but the royal door and the side doors to the sanctuary remained

standing. Unfortunately, at the end of 2018, careless post-war reconstruction work actually worsened the destruction.

The church is currently undergoing restoration. The Syriac-Catholic bishop of Mosul, Monsignor Petros Mouché, has delegated the project management to the French charity Fraternité en Iraq, which has already work on the restoration of the Mar Behnam and Sarah martyrion in the Nineveh plain. This is a project of major interest in terms of heritage conservation.



For the Fraternité en Iraq architect Guillaume, some interesting features remain, including at least two of the three arches between the nave and the choir, as well as a number of sculptures. Overall, I think we can rebuild and preserve most of the interesting heritage features which we should be able to find in the rubble.

What remains of the new Tahira?

The modern al-Tāhirā cathedral, built in the 19th century as an extension to the ancient church was entirely gutted and destroyed during the bombing of Mosul in 2017. At the end of the war only part of the apse was still visible. It would appear that there is nothing of the building to be saved.



Al-Tahira Internal Syriac Orthodox Church in Mosul

Founded by Patriarch Peter IV in 1893 AD (...). It was called the Inner Church of the Immaculate, and it was also called the Church of the Castle or the Church of the “upper” Monastery. It is located in the Citadel area, Ras Al-Kour, Al-Shaerein Market, on the right side of the city of Mosul.



In 1896 the construction (supervised by 2 architects: Naoum Hanna Al Aswad and Shimon Tanbouji) was completed and the Church was consecrated by Bishop Behnam Samraji on Sunday, 22 December of the same year (...). During major renovation in 1972, the central dome was rebuilt, and the roof was casted with “reinforced” concrete (...).

It is worth mentioning that the Patriarch of the Syriac Orthodox Church, Zakka I Eiwass as well as the current Archbishop of this Diocese Mar Nicodemus Dawood Matti Sharaf were baptised in this Church.



St. Ajmiadzin Armenian Orthodox Church in Mosul

Ajmiadzin Church is one of the most beautiful Churches, due to many beautiful murals and paintings on the walls of its corridors. In the outer courtyard, there is a circular mural of Armenian letters, facing on the opposite wall a large mural of the map of Armenia and the most prominent marks through the location of both Armenian Patriarchate and Yerevan, the capital city. On one side of the map, the Nagorno-Karabakh region is highlighted. In the courtyard there are graves of some priests who have been in charge of the Church in the past.



With the latest renovation in 2009, the community celebrated the opening of Virgin Mary mural and the Armenian martyr monument. There is also a painting of the Mosolian “Hellan” facing the main door of the Church showing the Armenian Patriarchate Church in Armenia, in addition to group of religious icons inside the Church.

The old Church was destroyed in 1963 and replaced by a modern Church, which was renovated twice in 1969 and 2009.

The Church has caravan classes for catechism and other Church activities. These classes were established by the Endowments of the Christian, Ezidian and Sabian Mandaean religions Divan.



St Mary Al-Tahira church in Baghdede (Qaraqosh)

St Mary al-Tahira church in Baghdede (Qaraqosh). It is the most iconic Christian building in Baghdede, 30 km southeast from Mosul and 80 km west of Erbil.



Baghdede is the largest city in the Nineveh plain, 40 km upstream from the confluence of the Tigris and the Great Zab. In the heart of the Syriacs' plain, close to the great Mar Benham Monastery, its beacon of spirituality, Baghdede was considered as the largest Syriac-Catholic town in the world, before ISIS attacked, which led all the inhabitants to flee overnight from August 6th to 7th 2017. Baghdede was a sort of denominational « capital city ». The town was liberated from ISIS in October 2016 and slowly the inhabitants have started coming back progressively since April 2017. Baghdede opens up therefore a new page in its own history, but its future remains uncertain.

New al-Tahira, ancient al-Tahira church

Amongst all those buildings is the most iconic: Saint Mary al-Tahira (the church of the Immaculate Conception), with its two churches, simply called the *ancient* and the *new* one, sometimes referred as “the Grand al-Tahira”.

Erected in the middle of the old part of the city, the church can be accessed to by a little street sloping gently upwards.

The new al-Tahira church gives access to the whole enclosure. Its construction started in 1932 and carried on until its consecration in 1948.

With its impressive dimensions (54 meters long, 24 meters wide), it is the largest Syriac-Catholic church in all the Middle-East. It makes all people from Baghdade proud, not only with its stature, but with the rallying of all inhabitants during the 16 years it took to build it.



Its impressive dome with a cross on the top of it could be seen from afar. The square bell tower above the main entrance door was the symbol of the town's inhabitants by itself. It had a great clock in it, above which was a roof with a crucifix erected on each of the four angles.

With a central nave and two side aisles, the new al-Tahira church rests on 22 very imposing Mosul marble pillars

The main nave, three times wider than the side aisles, was lit up by huge chandeliers, which are now charred from fire.

The inside of the building used to be dazzling white. The walls, the ceiling and above all the magnificent vault are now blackened by soot, caused by the arson lit by the Islamist violators who set the benches on fire as they retreated.

Marks of this gigantic fire and the plundering are still neatly visible today. As one gets near the choir and the altar, the unbearable profanation shows up with horror. Under the effects of the heat, some marble pillars got damaged and crumbled. Many of those pillars have been besmeared with Islamist writings and insults against Christians.

At the end of this large main nave used to stand on a few steps a marble altar. It has been destroyed by invaders, and replaced by a

wooden altar. Behind it, the violated ancient marble altar and tabernacle stands sheltered under a lancet-arched canopy. The outer part of this arch is adorned with an acanthus leaf ornamentation



that can be seen in many other churches throughout the Nineveh plain.

At the liberation of Baghdade, in October 2016, the floor was scattered with cartridge cases from firearms. All the time the site was besieged, ISIS used the church as target practice and shooting range.

On the way out, the end of the nave on the right hand side of the New al-Tahira gives access to the large inner courtyard. Under the paving stones is the parish graveyard. This courtyard had become a shooting range. Right in the middle, the ashes of the burning of books and liturgical stuff were still visible. Some of the outer pillars were riddled with bullets and one could see the inner metal framework.

All around, the courtyard is circled by parish rooms, as well as a little chapel on the left dedicated to the Virgin Mary and on the right, by a replica of Lourdes grotto and Saint Dominic chapel. Opposite the great church and thus closing the courtyard's space, the ancient al-Tahira church opens after getting down about ten steps. It is a modestly sized church, with three naves and three altars. It has been restored several times, particularly in 1745 after the Persian attack, during which Nader Shah had burnt it, together with all books he could find there. An ancient inscription "mentions the date of 1832 of the Greek era, that is to say 1521 (...)" A more ancient date was written there, still visible some years ago, in the tombs' chamber. Unfortunately, the wall separating this chamber from the chapel was knocked down and with

it the tombstone disappeared”, wrote already in 1961 Jean-Maurice Fiey, and added “one of the tombstone was one of a priest who died in the year Hegira 616, i-e 1219 AD”. This gives us quite an idea about how old this ancient al-Tahira church can be, without being able to be much more precise though.

Despite the vandalizing of the inside made by the ISIS terrorist, the church still has some precious vestiges, among which a carved hexagon-shaped baptismal font.



Source: “Mesopotamia Heritage” Website
www.mesopotamiaheritage.org/ar

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES IN IRAQ

CHALDEAN CHURCH

The roots of the Chaldean Church can be traced back to the Church of the East, that was located and flourished behind the walls of the Roman Empire. It was known as Syriac Church of the East, due to its spread to the East of Euphrates and also the Church of Persia in relation to the Persian land. These appellations run deep in the history and civilization of Mesopotamia.

Whereas the current ecclesiastical names, such as Chaldean or Assyrian Church with their own specificities and reasons are relatively “recent”, despite the fact that they refer to ancient civilizations.

The "Syriac" language was the language of trading and culture in the countries located along the “Silk Road”, and is still a common dialect of Chaldeans, Assyrians and Syriacs in Iraq, Southern Turkey, Iran and diaspora.

The current Patriarch of the Chaldean Church is Cardinal Louis Raphael Sako.

SYRIAC CATHOLIC CHURCH

The election of Rafael Jarkhi as a Bishop for Baghdad in 1862 marked the end of its affiliation with the Archdiocese of Mosul. At that time the Diocese of Baghdad included the central and southern governorates of Iraq until 1982 when Basrah and Amara became under the auspices of a Patriarchal Vicar. In 2020 Mar Athanasios Dardar was elected as a Bishop for the Diocese of Basrah and the southern governorates. Their current Archbishop of Baghdad is Mar Ephrem Youssef Abba.

The foundation of the Diocese of Mosul coincided with the date of the ordination of the first Catholic Bishop, Bishara Akhtal in 1790, who was “seated” on Easter of the following year. Initially, the centre was Mosul in spite of keeping the old name “Dair Mar Behnam and Baghdida Diocese”. Its current bishop is Archbishop Mar Youhanna Boutros Moshe. Additionally, the Syriac Catholic Church established the Diocese of "Hadiyab" in the city of Erbil whose Bishop is Mar Nathanael Nizar Ajam.

ARMENIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

This community started in 1954 and has Churches in Baghdad, the most important of which is the Cathedral of Our Lady of Flowers, founded by Bishop (Patriarch) Jean Casprian. Another Church in Mosul carries similar name, Our Lady of Flowers.

Currently, Monsignor Joseph Narcis is the Patriarchal Vicar for this Diocese.

MELKITE GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH

The arrival of faithful of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church to Iraq started in the 18th Century and their first priest was appointed in 1845. The current Patriarch is Youssef Absi, who resides in Damascus. Father Maximus Hakim (1926-1964) takes the credit for constructing the current Saint George Church in Baghdad, which was consecrated in 1962. There is a Centre for Oriental Studies attached to this Church under the supervision of Father Mansour Al Mukhlissy.

LATIN CHURCH

The Latin Diocese was founded in 1638. Even though bishops could not reside in this Diocese for hundred years and was elevated to Archbishopric in 1848. Their Archbishops lived in Mosul until 1939,

when Bishop Arman do Shayla (and the Apostolic Nuncio in Iraq) moved the headquarters to Baghdad.

Currently, the Bishop of Latin Church in Iraq is His Excellency Jean Sleman.

ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

The Church of the East was established by the Apostles: Mar Addai and his student Mar Mari, who is considered as the first Patriarch of this Church. The Church of the East thrived after the Arab conquest, especially under the Abbasid Caliphate, in a way that by the end of the 10th Century there were fifteen Metropolitan Centre within the boundaries of the Abbasid state alone. However, after the invasion of Baghdad in 1258, by Hulagu, Christian were dispersed resulting in the migration of large Assyrian groups to the mountainous region and the move of Patriarchal Seat to Erbil, then to Alqosh in 1320 and to Kochans (1592-1915). The current Patriarch of the Church is Mar Gewargis III Salwa.

ANCIENT EASTERN CHURCH

The "Eastern Church" has gone through difficult circumstances and "ruptures", the last of which was the split into two parts in 1964, and the establishing of the "ancient Catholic Apostolic Church" that followed the Julian calendar, known as the "Eastern". Its first Patriarch was Mar Toma Garmo, succeeded by His Beatitude Addai II in 1972.

SYRIAC ORTHODOX CHURCH

Established by the end of the 8th Century, their Diocese of Baghdad have prospered for five centuries. While, its contemporary start-up was actually in 1934, when a small Church was built after the name of Saint Thomas to serve members of the community who came from

Mosul and surrounding suburbs, then numbers increased in early sixties. Its current Bishop is His Eminence Bishop Mar Saweros Hawa.

As for Mosul and Kirkuk Diocese that was established in the 6th Century and settled in 628, the headquarters was in St Matthew Monastery (Dair Mar Matta) and their Bishop was given a title of “Bishop of Dair Mar Matta, Nineveh, and Mosul” that in 1153 turn out to be the headquarters of “Doctors of the Eastern Church”. In the middle of the 18th Century, the Diocese of Dair Mar Matta was disaffiliated from it.

His Eminence Archbishop Nicodemus Dawood Matti Sharaf is currently in charge of Syriac Orthodox Church in Mosul and Kurdistan region.

ARMENIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The first wave of emigration of Armenians to Iraq was in the 17th Century. The Church of Virgin Mary (Miskentah) in Baghdad is a living evidence for the presence of Armenian since then. With its founding, the Diocese was established and affiliated with Anchymiasin (Armenia), the headquarters of the Catholicos Vaskin I. The Diocese assumed great importance in welcoming migrants during World War I. The majority of Armenians live in Baghdad, and the rest are divided into four centres including: Basrah, Mosul, Kirkuk, and Zakho. Its current Bishop is His Excellency Mar Avak Asadorian.

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Recognized in Baghdad at the beginning of the 20th Century, when some of its community came from Urmia to Iraq and settled in Habbaniyah upon their arrival, where they established their own Church.

The Diocese of the Greek Orthodox Church includes: Iraq, Kuwait, and the Arabian Gulf, therefore their Bishop moves between Baghdad and Kuwait.

Currently, Economos Younan Al-Fred is serving the community in Baghdad.

COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

Established in early 1970s when Egyptian start seeking work in Iraq. Most of them lived in Baghdad, Mosul, Kirkuk, and Basrah. Currently, Qumos Mina al-Oreshlemy is serving this community.

NATIONAL EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Protestant community was established in Iraq around 1800, as a result of the reform movement of the 16th Century that made its way to all Arab countries including Iraq. The core was number of individuals and families in Mosul and gradually expanded to include Baghdad, Basrah and Kirkuk.

Source: Endowment of the Christian, Ezidian and Sabian Mandaean Religions Divan



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